

## ABSTRACT

An intra-aortic balloon catheter having a gas lumen insert disposed within its gas lumen during insertion of the catheter into the blood vessel of a patient. The gas lumen insert facilitates insertion and helps prevent kinking of the catheter.

1. A catheter assembly for insertion into a blood vessel, comprising:  
a. a catheter tube having a proximal end and a distal end;  
b. a gas lumen insert disposed within the catheter tube;  
c. a proximal connector connected to the proximal end of the catheter tube;  
d. a distal connector connected to the distal end of the catheter tube;  
e. a gas lumen insert disposed within the catheter tube, the gas lumen insert being disposed within the catheter tube during insertion of the catheter tube into the blood vessel.